

Medical Work for Women in Shao-wu, China

THE SHAO-WU HOSPITAL
FRANCES K. BEMENT



The New Building for the Shao-wu Hospital.



We are all very grateful to you for sending Dr. Bement. Please send another
doctor for our cousins far from Shao-wu.

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THE SHAO-WU HOSPITAL

MISS FRANCES K. BEMENT

You will need twenty-one days to go from San Francisco to Shanghai. This gives you one day in beautiful Honolulu and two days in Japan. In Shanghai you will probably have to wait three or four days for a coast steamer to take you to Foochow, and you can keep busy just looking at people and streets, besides other interesting things.

You are not really in China until you reach Foochow, and not even here since the fronts of so many thousands of houses have been cut off in order to make the five and ten feet wide streets wide enough for the auto. One feels as though old China were fast passing away.

But when you take one of our little row-boats and start up the river, you will feel that you are really in China. You will find the five hundred rapids all there, I believe. However, you can make the trip now, if you carry no freight and take the very smallest boats and have good strong boatmen, in nine days instead of seventeen, as of old.

The scenery! How you will enjoy it. Mountains and hills of all kinds and shapes on each side of the river and piling up row on row. That's why it takes

so long to go up the river. Sometimes you will think you are going right through the mountains, there are so many rocks on either side and sometimes the men have to get out and lift the boat up over the rocks.

If a doctor is with us you will see hundreds of patients coming to the boat every time we stop. A doctor does not pass by every day on the banks of the River Min. But we must not linger but hasten on to the hospital in Shaowu. You will want to stop in the yard and enjoy the beautiful flowers.

See that rose-bush over there. I think there are over a thousand roses on it just now and a hundred school children can stand under this one bush. See the beautiful bamboos. We have enough to decorate the churches and houses whenever there is a wedding or holiday, commencement or Easter. And the palm trees! I think there are over a hundred raised from our own seed. But here we are at the hospital door.

This is the old building we call the dispensary, and this is where the medical work has been done the past eighteen years, but just over that wall is the fine new hospital, one hundred and twenty feet long and fifty feet wide. Now we can have sixty beds and room for everything. Yes, we have enough for a tubercular ward and an isolation ward and everything else that is needed. We even have a lot we now use for our dairy. We think we can hardly do without it here in China until the Chinese get milk stations established.

There is little Samuel. He has come to say that his mother is better and they can do without milk now and let some more needy ones have it, for their father

says they will soon have some of their own. How many patients a year? There are generally about sixteen thousand each year, sometimes more than that.

See that little child with a bottle. He has come to get two ounces of milk for his baby brother. Oh, yes, two ounces make a lot of difference with a sick child here in China. Gindea, the nurse, gives out the milk. She has her measuring glass marked off rather queerly and if you ask her why, she says: "When a person is so poor that she can buy only one ounce of milk, she ought to have a great big ounce, but if people are rich enough to buy a lot, they ought to be able to pay for all they get."

Notice the little four-year-old girl with a mark on her face. Her mother died when she was born. She was one of those the doctor could not help. Did they call the doctor? Yes, they called ten times but the doctor was elsewhere.

Look at that little girl. She remembered to tell her old grandmother how to prevent chilblains and the dear old lady, nearly eighty years old, stood on her door step and told every passer-by: "Yes," she says, "I have saved from severe pain nearly a thousand this winter, and many come along and thank me and I am glad God can use a woman as old as I to help her fellow countrymen.

Look at that funny woman. She has come back to say thank you, for she has had a dislocated jaw for six weeks and she is so pleased that it has really stayed in its proper place ever since Doctor Bement put it there.

Notice that bright young girl. Her name is Anna Siao. She nearly lost her eyesight while teaching over in Kien Ning, four days from a doctor. She had



Some of us will soon be ready to work in the new hospital we hope you will start in Kien Ning.

just graduated from our school, and speaking of soft jobs and places, she says: "You like a soft bed, so do I. I have a soft plank in the middle of my bed." A Chinese bed is made of seven boards laid across

two long narrow stools. Did she really lose her eyesight? No, but after she had made the four days' journey in the hot sun to Shaowu, her eyes were almost hopeless, and it took nearly a year to get them into even fairly good condition. The doctor does not call them even fairly good yet, but she is able to use them in her work and she is a great worker. When she talks people take notice. Yes, I think she could tell any story there is in the Bible that is worth while. She has spoken to an audience of three hundred, many of them heathen, or non-Christian I should say. I don't like the word heathen, and they all listened and never tired. We shall never be satisfied until we have a doctor or a nurse in this Kien Ning station to help our Christian workers and the people in the adjoining counties.

See that little mother. She lost her mind over there during her little one's illness. She could not forget that she was four days from a doctor, and she had learned what it meant to have a doctor near by, for she had always lived in Shaowu, but she and her husband were sent to this far away field. They went as brave home missionaries, yes, braver than many foreign missionaries. But when her mother-in-law had been sick for weeks and then her little one became very sick and she had almost no sleep for weeks, it was too much. Yes, she lost her mind for several weeks until her mother went to her and brought her back home, and even now she is not able to do the work she had been doing and will always have to be more careful. We do not believe it pays to put our

Christian workers in such hard places, and we have well trained doctors and nurses now from our own girls' school who could go there. Why should we expect so much more of them than we do of ourselves? Yes, we want a doctor at least in Kien Ning.

See that little woman. She had been married ten years and no child. You can never know the awfulness of the meaning of that, until you have been in China. Pray? The whole county prayed for her but she says now, they all thank God and Doctor Bement for the man child that has come into their home. The doctor worked hard all night and she herself was sick enough to be in bed, but she knew mother and child were both at death's door. Yes, the cost was great, but she says it was worth it and when you see the gratitude in the mother's face and the change it has made in the father, yes, and the grandfather and grandmother, you too, will agree that it was worth the cost and would have said with the doctor, if you could, "I will not let her or the child die."

See that beautiful woman. We call her the Madonna. Her little one died because the doctor was somewhere else. You know one doctor cannot be all over in seven counties all at once.

See that other little woman looking at the flowers. She sees everything. She hovered between life and death for days. Her child died at birth and I buried it near the wall. You know ordinarily they hire a beggar to take a dead child off and throw it away, or perhaps bury it, but I buried this one. The mother was saved and she is the Bible woman at Stone River

Mouth and how she loves her little group of girls and women. The doctor worked hard to save her. Stone River Mouth would have suffered a great loss had she gone.

See that tiny three-year-old? Her mother died in childbirth before the doctor could be reached. She said she wanted to go to a hard lonely place where others would not go. She wanted to teach the little girls some of the lessons she had learned. She found the place, it was hard and lonely. Her little girl's name is Hannah; I think someone will want to help Hannah through school. She is a bright little girl and I believe she will make a good teacher some day. The father is married again and the mother now has a child of her own. In China mothers like their own children best.

I see you are looking at Mrs. Tung. She is the hospital Bible woman. She lost seven children before she came to us. Her husband was our personal teacher and while he taught us to speak in the Shaowu language, he learned what the Bible taught. One day I asked him to teach his wife. "Oh," he said, "She cannot learn any more than a cow." But I insisted that I had some letters to write and no other work for him to do but to teach his wife. When he came back the next morning he said, "She cannot learn," and he said the same thing nearly a dozen times, but one morning he came back and said, "I guess she can learn, she knows one verse."

She's always ready to hear everyone's troubles and always has a kind word for everyone. "Stupid!" she

says when she suggests that the women learn to read "Why no one can be more stupid than I. Ask my husband and see. I am sure no one is too stupid to learn if she will only try. Trouble! who can have more trouble than I, having lost seven children? But since we have learned to put our trust in God, He has given us seven other children and He has cared for them all along, He and Doctor Bement." She is well able to tell all the sick about the Great Physician and how He has put it into the hearts of the good women of America to send doctors and medicines to heal them of all their diseases.

You see there are nearly eighty other patients here but you can never know about all of them. They have malaria, bad eyes, awful ulcers, and all sorts of stomach troubles and skin diseases. The doctor is the only one who takes time to learn of all these. Doesn't she get tired of listening to everybody who wants to tell of all manner of ills, pains and troubles? Yes, but she is sorry for them and wants to help them when she can.

I am glad you are here today, for you can see the Doctor's Bible Class of about sixty women and children. Yes, this is for the poor and needy, for those whom others have not yet reached. Oh, yes, the doctor calls on them all in their homes and invites them to come. She teaches them herself. She serves tea and warcakes, she wants them to have a good time. Some days she gives them each a handful of peanuts. Today she gave each one a picture post card. If she could give each one a garment for one

of their little children on Christmas how glad it would make them all.

These women have only been coming once a week and many of them have to bring one or two or three children. It is a common sight to see a mother with one child on her lap and another leaning against her and her book in her hand studying a verse over and over again. But they learn, and some of them know nearly a hundred helpful, joy giving verses already, and their faces look brighter and their lives are not so empty and their homes are happier and the Doctor thinks it pays, don't you?

Yes, we have had the influenza. Did you happen to see Doctor Bement following that coffin along yes-care for the sick in the hospital. She took care of the others until the influenza took her. Yes, I guess she gave her life for others all right. The beautiful flowers on the coffin? Oh, yes, the little children said, "Why Doctor Bement, you are picking all of the best ones. Why do you always give your best to the poorest?" "Because the rich do not need them so much," and did you see the Doctor, the only person, following the coffin to the grave? Yes, she has to know about and care about so many that no one else does.

See that man, he wants the Doctor to go three days' journey over the mountains to his wife, who has been sick two days in child-birth. Can she go? No. It would take seven days if she stayed only one day and she might be too late and how many she would have to neglect near by those seven days. When we have

our little hospital in Kien Ning with our Shaowu school girl as doctor this need will be supplied. Some day we shall have at least one trained nurse for each county. See that woman, they brought her four days' journey on a wheelbarrow, over rough cobble stones. Yes, it was some different from going to a hospital in America.

What is that woman bringing a dozen eggs in her big handkerchief for? She has heard that the Doctor eats eggs and she has brought them to show her gratitude. Will the Doctor eat them? No, she will probably give them to some poor sick child or to a poor old woman. But it pleases her just the same to see the gratitude of the patient. Yes, I think they are all grateful.

You would have enjoyed being at the Doctor's Birthday Party. It really showed how many of these poor people do express their gratitude. But most of it is seen in the tearful eye and grateful look. Yes, it is good to see. A mother is not slow to see when her child has been saved and never forgets it, never, no, never.

And now, I want you to witness two Christmas days in the hospital. The first one was not like a real Christmas. The poor Doctor had nothing for the helpers, patients or little folks. No, it was just no Christmas at all. But the second was as different from it as daylight from black night. Good friends had sent pretty little garments for the little ones, such cute little baby jackets just like those the children wear in America, made of pink tennis flannel (no, the

Chinese would never want a little child to wear white unless they were entirely foreign trained. It would be mourning.) And such dear little bonnets and toys



We would like to be doctors like Dr. Bement.

and the dearest little dolls about six inches long and handkerchiefs. Yes, and someone sent a Victrola Record! My! we hardly knew we were four days'

journey from a wheeled vehicle or a telegraph station, or an electric light, when we heard that and how the school girls and patients do enjoy the music.

Are you dreaming? Yes, I am dreaming. Of what? Of that Chinese house which nobody wants over there in Kien Ning. Why doesn't anyone want it? Because they say there are evil spirits in it. Are there? No. It only needs the drains cleaned out, the sunlight let in and a little cleaning and putty and paint with flowers planted about it and it would make a fine hospital. Who would be the doctor? One of our two Shaowu school girls who graduates this June from the Peking Union Medical School. How much good would it do? With no doctor in three counties, how much good could be done if one were put there? Yes, I believe God wants it and I can see it there. I know it is going to be, don't you? Yes, I see a clean orderly little hospital with four of our school girls in charge of it; our little girls now grown to days of wonderful usefulness.

One is the doctor in charge, with her diploma from the Peking Union Medical School, dated June, 1919. One is a well trained nurse, earnest and eager to help save life, and to teach mothers how to save life too. And Virtue is the Matron. She who says there are two heavens, one where God is and the other is the Girls' School. She will help build a new heaven in this dark earth. And Phoebe, a steam engine for work, will be able to do all good works abundantly. She will be the Hospital Evangelist, and house visitor and social settlement worker. She already has more

than one street Sunday School and has had much practice during the influenza in caring for the sick.

One of the saddest things I ever heard was the pounding on the gates and the cries "Save life, save life," and I knew there was no doctor to go. Again I hear the pounding on the heavy gates and again the cries, "Save life, save life." Who will hear and answer "Send me, Send me"?

MEDICAL WORK FOR WOMEN IN SHAO-WU, CHINA

Two million people are in this remote city and vicinity.

There is one Woman's Hospital and Dispensary for these two millions.

There is one physician for the women and little girls of these two millions.

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